

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A connection between a side rail and a structural part at the front of a motor vehicle,
the structural part having a top edge situated in the vicinity of a zone of the bodywork
that might receive an impact from the head or the hip of a pedestrian, wherein the
5 connection comprises force-opposing means enabling the side rail to oppose the vertical
forces to which the part is subjected, and wherein said means are collapsible.
2. A connection according to claim 1, in which the force-opposing means are constituted
by a finger mounted on each side rail to move under drive from an actuator between an
10 extended position in which the finger retains the part vertically, and a retracted position
in which the part is released.
3. A connection according to claim 2, in which the actuator is a motor.
- 15 4. A connection according to claim 2, in which the actuator is connected to an impact
sensor, preferably a sensor suitable for distinguishing between contact with a pedestrian
and contact with an obstacle other than a pedestrian.
5. A connection according to claim 1, in which the force-opposing means are constituted
20 by a fixed finger that is breakable above a predetermined vertical force threshold to
which the part is subjected.

6. A connection according to claim 1, in which the force-opposing means comprise a fusible portion of the part.

7. A connection according to claim 1, in which the force-opposing means are constituted
5 by an insert embedded in the part (5) and fixed to the side rail, said insert being configured to split the part beyond a predetermined threshold of vertical force to which said part is subjected.

8. A connection according to claim 1, in which the part carries an electrical hood lock
10 which is caused to open by a sensor that has detected contact with a pedestrian.

9. A connection according to claim 1, in which the ends of the part lie under fender linings of the vehicle and are secured thereto by fusible fasteners, e.g. overmolded or crimped inserts.

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10. A connection according to claim 1, wherein the part is a cooling unit.

11. A connection according to claim 1, wherein the part is an equipment front face.